

Tithe of Bats

Night Magnitude 10

Performing the Ritual

Performing this ritual takes at least 2 minutes of roleplaying. This ritual targets an opaque container.

Effects

When the ritual is performed, the ritualists put twenty measures of Iridescent Gloaming and/or Dragonbone in an opaque container. At the completion the contents disappear, presented to the Night eternal Sadogua, who is always hungry for these tasty materials.

It will take at least an hour for anything to happen, potentially longer. After this time, when the box is opened, it will contain a four pieces of crystal fire. Each crystal can be used as part of a Night ritual as if it were up to three crystals of mana. The entire crystal is consumed regardless of how much is needed, but it can be passed among multiple magicians who are contributing to the ritual if desired.

The crystal has no use in spellcasting, or in the rituals of other realms.

Additional Targets

The ritual can affect additional measures. Each additional ten measures included in the ritual increases the magnitude by 4. Additional measures must be placed in the same container but need not be the same type of material.

OOO note

This item is a ritual text.

Any character with the Night Ritual Lore skill can master this ritual. You must have a free slot or experience point to master a new ritual. After an appropriate period of roleplaying spent studying these pages, it should then be brought to a referee who will add the ritual to those you have mastered. Doing this does not 'use up' the ritual text.

This ritual cannot be learned by other means; it cannot be taught by a character who knows it unless the ritual is added to the body of Imperial Lore by the Conclave.

Ribbon ID: 18110



TITHE OF BATS

RITUAL OF THE REALM OF NIGHT

CODIFIED WINTER 382YE AT THE ICY CRAG OF THE ETERNAL SUN, UNDER
SUPERVISION BY BROTHER LUKE OF THE SHATTERED TOWER OF HIGHGUARD
WHO SERVES AS MASTER OF ICE AND DARKNESS



Developing the Ritual

This ritual was developed at the Icy Crag of the Eternal Sun under the direction of Luke of the Shattered Tower. Work was completed shortly before the Summer Solstice 382YE. The original arcane projection used to create the ritual was received from the eternal Sadogua – one of a number distributed to the magicians of the Empire during 381YE.

The ritual was completed while Eleonaris was the patron of the Icy Crag. Several of her heralds contributed suggestions, but for the most part they were "why are you working on this, it's terrible." It appeared that these heralds were offended not by the fact that this was a "pointless Night ritual" but by its transactional nature. They were, in short particularly unhelpful.

The Nature of Sadogua

Sadogua is known as the Brother of Wizards, but appears to collect names as something of a hobby. For most of the Empire's history, he has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Imperial Conclave, and of Imperial magicians. That is not to say that he has always been popular; even a cursory examination of his involvement with the Empire indicates that he goes through cycles of being granted amity, and having it removed, only to be granted amity again a few years later. The main reason for this cycle of friendship and neutrality, as near as historians can tell, is that he regularly "goes too far" in his enthusiasm for helping magicians to perform magic – either granting unwise assistance to an Imperial coven, or being revealed to have aided a coven of the Empire's enemies in some unacceptable manner.

This cycle was broken decisively once in Imperial history when Sadogua was declared an enemy of the Empire during the reign of Empress Teleri. The reasons for this enmity are not public knowledge, but the Navarr vates are believed to have been instrumental in opposing reconciliation with the Conclave until 132YE.

The eternal seems sincere in his enthusiasm for helping magicians perform their magic, both large-scale and small. He scatters boons minor and major to those who catch his attention, and it is this largesse that seems most often to get him into trouble with the Conclave. Presumably, he is just as profligate with magicians who secure his friendship among the Thule, the Grendel, the Jotun, and even the Druj.

The Power of an Eternal

This ritual is only possible with the direct aid of Sadogua. It is a fine example of how eternals and ritual magic interact. Essentially, without the explicit approval of Sadogua at all stages of the design process, the effect simply could not be created as either a ritual text or an arcane projection.

In almost all known cases where such rituals are created, the eternal stipulates behaviour by mortals that will void the agreement – no eternal has created a ritual that they themselves can choose to break. No matter what is said, the eternal is bound to the ritual once they agree to it, while the magicians who negotiate with them are free to act as they wish – as long as they accept the consequences of doing so.

In the case of this ritual, Sadogua has woven into the ritual the requirement that the Empire continue to have an Imperial Conclave that operates without interference from the Synod. Even were that requirement to be broken, all it would mean is that Sadogua would be free to cease honouring the agreement to exchange crystal fire for iridescent gloaming or dragonbone. Should that restriction never be contravened, the eternal cannot withdraw from the agreement to honour the ritual. Even were he to be subject to enmity, he would still have to provide the crystal fire to anyone who performed the ritual – albeit illegally.

A Thirst for Gloaming and Dragonbone



While Sadogua often alters his appearance, there are several constants. He remains jocular and friendly in almost all interactions; he is generally lazy, gluttonous, and lustful in character; and he has an unquenchable thirst for iridescent gloaming and dragonbone. It seems he literally cannot get enough – he crunches sticks of dragonbone as if they are delicate candies, and swigs iridescent gloaming as if it were a bottle of fine liquor.

He has in the past secured large amounts of both materials from Imperial magicians in return for two common boons – either he has paid for the gloaming and dragonbone with magical trinkets, or he has bestowed handfuls of crystal fire. Indeed, only recently he exchanged a certain secret apothecary recipe and the aid of a uniquely potent herald for a large wicker basket full of dragonbone.

Of some interest to the magicians responsible for codifying this ritual is that it has in some ways been designed explicitly to be difficult to "fine tune." Unlike the similar ritual *Before the Throne of Estavus*, the base ritual requires at least twenty measures of material, and additional materials must be applied in units of ten rather than five. There seems to be no particular reason for this, beyond the whims of Sadogua. One researcher suggests that the answer as to why is obvious really – Sadogua is simply gluttonous and wants to be given as much dragonbone and iridescent gloaming as possible.

Performing the Ritual

The basic performance requirements are in no way complex. A sack, or a box with a lid, are filled with dragonbone or iridescent gloaming (or a combination of the two), and then the ritual is performed. The contents disappear, and then some time later the appropriate amount of crystal fire appears in their place. The sounds of rapidly beating wings are occasionally heard by those who listen closely to the container while the exchange is taking place, as if there were bats fluttering inside the container despite it generally being far too small for such a thing to be possible. One researcher, a Varushkan named Ganovic Borovovitch Lesanzny claimed to have heard concentrated buzzing, as of dozens of fist-sized bees, but there is speculation he had been drinking heavily while waiting for the exchange to take place.



The container might be inscribed with the rune Lann, obviously, but it is also appropriate to use the rune Diras – a rune Sadogua considers himself to have a close connection with. In dramaturgy, a ritual in which the Witch or the Mountebank trades something with someone in return for magical power, often the Cup or the Coin (or a combination of the two) usually in the Counting House or the Chamber (not a Throne usually associated with commerce or trade, but it seems to have particular, albeit peculiar, resonance with Sadogua himself).

It is appropriate to name Sadogua by as many of his names as the ritualists can be bothered with, perhaps even creating new names if they are minded to do so. Musical performances are also resonant with this ritual, especially humorous songs such as those created by the Gremani family (who of course live in the vale below the Icy Crag and were readily available to help with refining the ritual), or even the Handful of Dust (although that song is significantly less well known since they met their tragic ends).

One wag suggested that it might be appropriate to perform the ritual as a faux religious ceremony, that the gloaming and dragonbone be "sacrificed" to Sadogua, possibly before an effigy of the eternal. This "joke" did not play well with the other scholars and the offending individual was removed from the faculty post-haste.